

ABSTRACT

A system and method is provided for selectively activating biometric sensors (102, 104, 106) to authenticate the identity of an individual while conserving system resources.

- 5 A biometric system has at least two tiers of sensors, first (102) and second tier sensors (104, 106), where the first tier sensors (102) are characteristically less sophisticated and less expensive to operate than the second tier sensors (104, 106). One or more of the second tier sensors (104, 106) are activated only after a user's biometric is successfully or unsuccessfully verified by one of the first tier sensors (102). Alternatively, the second tier
- 10 sensors (104, 106) are activated in response to a user requesting a particular level of service or in response to an environmental condition. Alternatively, only those sensors are turned on which are compatible with a user's biometric profile.